Syn. 7. 67. 34

An

EPISTLE

FOR THE

Strengthening and Confirming

OF

FRIENDS,

in their Most

Holy Faith.

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FRIENDS,

ALL abroad every where, think it not strange concerning the fiery Tryal, which is but to try you; for is it not written, *Every man's work must be try'd:* neither think the time long; neither look at Sufferings, nor at the Potentness of those that cause you to suffer; but look to the Lord, that is able to deliver: Did the Lord ever leave or forsake his People in a suffering Condition, that stood for his Name, or gave up themselves freely to whatever the Persecutors could do: For there were Informers, and Laws, and

Decrees made in *Ahasuerus*'s time, but the Lord frustrated them; & those that stood for the Name of the Lord came over all at last, when the Lord saw their Faithfulness, and the tryal of their Faith. *Haman* was an Informer, and said unto King *Ahasuerus*, *There is a certain People scatter'd abroad, and dispis'd among the People in all the Provinces of thy Kingdom, and their Laws are divers from all people's, neither keep they the King's Laws, therefore it is not for the King's profit to suffer them so; if it please the King let them be destroy'd, and he would give so much Money*, as you may read in *Esther* 3. 9. and this was but for want of poor *Mordecai's* bowing to him: So the King granted this great Informer's Request, to destroy all the seed of the *Jews* that were within his Provinces: But read on in the third and fourth Chapters of *Esther*, and see what came to pass in a little time; the *Jews* were deliver'd, and the Informer went to the Gallows. Now if *Haman* had been quiet, it is a question, if he had been destroy'd, or not; for the Adversaries lifting up themselves against the Lord's Remnant never lengthens their dayes: For when the Faithfulness of his People, and Uprightness of their Hearts to him are seen, he soon brings Deliverance, they need not find the Lord a way out to deliver.

Therefore all Friends every where, give up all you are and have, and wait to find a Godly Resolution springing up within you; and say, *The God whom we serve is able to deliver us; if not, we are resolv'd to Serve and Worship the Lord.* In *Nebuchadnezzar's* time (as you may read in the 3d of *Daniel*) how there were Informers; in the 8th verse, *Certain Caldeans came to accuse the* Jews: in the 10th verse, *Thou, O King, made a Decree, That they that would not fall down and worship the Image, at the sound of the Musick, should be cast into the Burning-Fiery Furnace*; and so they go on, and tell the King, *There were such three Men, which regarded him not, neither*

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ſerved his Gods, nor worſhipped the Image that he had ſet up: Then the King, in his Rage and Fury, commanded the men to be brought before him; and he asked, *If theſe things were true, That they ſerv'd not his Gods, nor worſhipp'd the Golden Image which he had ſet up*; *now if ſo be they would be ready at the ſound of the Muſick, to fall down and worſhip the ſaid Image that he had made*; *but if not, in the ſame Hour they ſhould be caſt into the mid'ſt of the Burning-Fiery Furnace:* Now their Anſwer was, *The God whom they ſerv'd was able to deliver them*; *but if not, we will not Bow:* And he did deliver them to his own Praiſe and Glory, but they that caſt them into the Fire were ſlain with the Flame; but *Shedrah*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego came out of the Furnace without harm, which did aſtoniſh the King*; *and he bleſſed the God of* Shadrach, Meſhech, *and* Abednego. Now Friends, if ſuch a Work ſhould be brought forth through your Faithfulneſs, would it not make your hearts glad, that God ſhould be ſo honour'd by your Faithfulneſs? For if theſe men had ſhrunk and bow'd, the Lord's Power had not been ſo manifeſted: For the Faithfulneſs of Friends puts an opportunity into the Lord's Hand to make his Power known. For, Did not the Lord raiſe up *Pharoah* to make his Power known; when *Moſes* led the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, *Pharoah* with his Hoſt follow'd in great haſte, and purſu'd them to the Red-Sea, thinking to have deſtroy'd them all; and ſome began to Murmer againſt *Moſes*, why he would bring them thither, to be deſtroy'd; yet *Moſes* his Faith was in God, and he bid them but *Stand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of God*, *and the* Egyptians, *whom they had ſeen that day, they ſhould never ſee again*: and ſo it came to paſs: for Iſrael *had a Way through the Sea, but* Pharoah *and his Hoſt were drown'd, and not a man eſcap'd.* Now Friends, if thoſe that were with *Moſes* ſhould have *drawn back to* Pharoah *in this ſeeming Diſtreſs, thinking to get to* Moſes *again when the Danger*

was over, had they not run from their Safety to their Destruction?

So now Friends, none to draw back again, neither to be slack in keeping your Meetings; *For he that draws back, the Lords Soul has no Pleasure in him, and the Back-slider in heart shall be fill'd with his own wayes:* And therefore Friends, be of a Noble Mind, and Valliant for the Truth upon the Earth; the Noble Seed brings to be of a Noble Mind.

And Friends, it is convenient that Tryals come, that the Chaff may be seperated from the Wheat, for they who are of this noble Seed will not be Treacherous nor False-hearted, but have a faithful Respect to the Honour of God forever.

And observe in *Daniel*'s day, how that they could not bring him to suffer, but concerning the Worship of his God (so they can find nothing against us but concerning the Worship of our God, for which Blessed be the Name of the Lord forever) so a Decree was made, *that whosoever ask'd a Petition either of God or Man, for thirty dayes, save of the King, should be cast into the Den of Lyons*; and Daniel *was constant to pray to the Lord three times a day, with his Window open towards* Jerusalem, *as his manner was:* Now *Daniel* might have shut his Window, and forbore to pray to his God for so many dayes; *but then how could the Lord have appear'd in his Deliverance, if he had not kept to his Worship as his manner was, by which the Name of the Lord came to be exalted:* And he that made the Decree, *commanded all to call upon the God of* Daniel. So that you may see alwayes it was Faithfulness and Constancy that brought Honour to God, and Deliverance to themselves, and Destruction upon the Adversaries.

So Friends, stand in the Fear and Dread of God, and you will become *a Dread to all Nations*: what need you fear any but the Lord God, that made Heaven and Earth? *What,*

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will a Living Man be afraid of a Dead Man? So you that are alive in Christ Jesus, what need you fear them that are dead in *Adam*, in *Sin* and *Transgression*, *a body of Sin* and *a body of Death? What need a living Body be afraid of a dead Body?*

So Friends, be of a valliant Mind; they who are of the noble Birth, will be of a valliant Mind, and I know will give their Appearance for God, who *hath appear'd for us, and in us, and among us*: Many comfortable and peaceable Meetings we have enjoy'd, wherein we have been refreshed together, and satisfied together, and our Hearts made glad together, in the enjoyment of the *Goodness of our God*; which is (I know) *not wanting in this suffering Time*.

Now in the consideration of these things Friends, hold up your heads; *for God he will be our Deliverer*: I dare be bold to speak in the Name of the Lord, *That the Lord will bring a Calm*; for, was the Old World so rude and cruel as this Generation? they let *Noah* build the Ark, and did not go about to make a Spoil of his Work, though they were against him, and call'd him, *Old Fool*, yet they let him alone with his Work.

But this Generation will not let the Lord's People work the Works of God, nor Worship Him whom the Ark was a Type of.

And if the Lord overthrew the old *World* for their Wickedness, and their slighting of *Noah's* warning of them; what will he do to this Generation, that not only rejects the Warnings of them *that are call'd and chosen of God to work his Works*, but *seeks to destroy them?* I say, how can the Lord hold his Hand, but let it fall heavy upon those that have dealt thus cruelly with his People; seeing he overthrew those that never *dealt* so cruelly?

So

So Friends, let your confidence be in the Lord God that made Heaven and Earth; trust in his Arm; let him be your Shield; he will set up a Standard for you, that all Nations of the Earth shall never be able to pull down; for the Lord never leaves nor forsakes his Heritage: Or where was there ever any that suffer'd for God, but their Enemies fell before them? Though they sought to ruin the Lord's People, yet the Pit they had digg'd for others, themselves fell into it; and it will never fall otherwise to them that think to destroy the Lord's Heritage.

Friends, let none think that the Beast's worship shall spread again, neither shall People wonder after him, as they have done; neither shall the great Whore spread her Skirts over Nations, as she has done, neither shall she be heard to make her boast; for the Lord hath and will confound her, with those that have committed Fornication with her: And his own Name, and Power, and Kingdom he will set up over all the *Names* and *Kingdoms* upon the Earth.

Two things the great Whore has boasted should never come upon her, yet she shall meet with them both; that is, *loss of Children, and Widowhood.*

It is observed in the North part of the Nation, what sort of men they are that are Informers, the most part of them are either *High*-way-men, or such as have been arraigned for *Felony*, or such as are come out of *Goals*, or idle Fellows that have spent their *Estates*, if they had any; and now would live upon the spoil of other honest Men's *Estates*: Now it is thought strange, that *Justices of Peace* and *Wise-men* of the Country, should disoblige the sober People, to gratifie such men as are here mentioned; it is not for their Honour I am sure.

Written the 10*th of the* 11*th Month* 1670. Leonard Fell

THE END.

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